

J_n , where R^1 and R^2 independently of one another are a hydrogen atom or a (C_1-C_4) alkyl radical and n is an integer from 10 to 5000, a weight ratio of $a:b$ being in a range from 90:10 to 10:90.

31
cont.
Sub
C1

14. (New) A food casing according to claim 13, wherein the thermoplastic starch derivative is a starch ester.

15. (New) A food casing according to claim 14, wherein the starch ester comprises a starch alkanoate.

16. (New) A food casing according to claim 14, wherein the starch ester comprises a starch acetate.

17. (New) A food casing according to claim 13, wherein the polymer comprises a polylactide, a poly(3-hydroxypropionic acid), a poly(3-hydroxybutyric acid), a poly(4-hydroxybutyric acid) or polycaprolactone.

18. (New) A food casing according to claim 13, wherein the weight ratio $a:b$ is in the range from 20:80 to 80:20.

19. (New) A food casing according to claim 13, wherein the weight ratio $a:b$ is in the range from 40:60 to 60:40.

20. (New) A food casing according to claim 13, wherein the thermoplastic mixture comprises at least one plasticizer and wherein a proportion of plasticizer(s) present in the thermoplastic mixture is up to 30% based on the total weight of the thermoplastic mixture.

21. (New) A food casing according to claim 20, wherein the plasticizer comprises glycerol, diglycerol, sorbitol, polyethylene glycol, citric acid triethyl ester, acetylcitric acid triethyl ester, glycerol triacetate, a phthalic ester or sorbitol monoester or sorbitol diester.

22. (New) A food casing according to claim 20, wherein the proportion of plasticizer present in the thermoplastic mixture is up to 15% by weight, based on the total weight of the thermoplastic mixture.

23. (New) A food casing according to claim 13, wherein the thermoplastic mixture comprises at least one lubricant and wherein a proportion of lubricant(s) present in

the thermoplastic mixture is up to 12% by weight based on the total weight of the thermoplastic mixture.

24. (New) A food casing according to claim 23, wherein the lubricant comprises a vegetable fat or a vegetable oil, a synthetic triglyceride, lecithin, an ethoxylated fatty alcohol or a wax.

25. (New) A food casing according to claim 23, wherein the proportion of lubricant(s) present in the thermoplastic mixture is from 2 to 6% by weight based on the total weight of the thermoplastic mixture.

26. (New) A food casing according to claim 23, wherein the proportion of lubricant(s) present in the thermoplastic mixture is from 3 to 6% by weight based on the total weight of the thermoplastic mixture.

27. (New) A food casing according to claim 13, wherein the thermoplastic mixture is mixed with fibers and wherein a proportion of fibers present in the thermoplastic mixture is up to 25% by weight based on the total weight of the mixture.

28. (New) A food casing according to claim 27, wherein the fibers comprise fibers from cotton linters, wood pulp, from regenerated cellulose, from hemp, flax, sisal or jute.

29. (New) A food casing according to claim 27, wherein the proportion of fibers present in the mixture is from 2 to 15 % by weight based on the total weight of the mixture.

30. (New) A food casing according to claim 27, wherein the proportion of fibers present in the thermoplastic mixture is from 5 to 15 % by weight based on the total weight of the mixture.

31. (New) A food casing according to claim 13, wherein the thermoplastic mixture comprises fillers and wherein a proportion of fillers present in the thermoplastic mixture is up to 12% by weight based on the total weight of the mixture.

32. (New) A food casing according to claim 31, wherein the fillers comprise, preferably calcium carbonate, talc, kaolin or anhydrite.

33. (New) A food casing according to claim 31, wherein the proportion of fillers present in the thermoplastic mixture is from 2 to 8% by weight based on the total weight of the mixture.

34. (New) A food casing according to claim 33, wherein a proportion of fillers present in the thermoplastic mixture is from 4 to 8% by weight based on the total weight of the mixture.

35. (New) A food casing according to claim 13, wherein the thermoplastic mixture comprises at least one crosslinker and wherein a proportion of the at least one crosslinker in the thermoplastic mixture is up to 20% by weight based on the total weight of the mixture.

36. (New) A food casing according to claim 35, wherein the at least one crosslinker comprises a dicarboxylic acid, a diisocyanate or triisocyanate, a dialdehyde, a di-epoxide, a diimine or a silane or siloxane containing vinyl group(s).

37. (New) A food casing according to claim 35, wherein the proportion of the at least one crosslinker(s) present in the thermoplastic mixture is from 0.5 to 10% by weight based on the total weight of the mixture.

38. (New) A food casing according to claim 35, wherein the proportion of the at least one crosslinker(s) present in the thermoplastic mixture is from 1 to 5% by weight based on the total weight of the mixture.

39. (New) A food casing according to claim 13, wherein the food casing is provided with an internal preparation and/or external preparation.

40. (New) A process for producing a food casing as claimed in claim 13, comprising extruding the thermoplastic mixture through an annular die and blowing it in an area ratio of from 1:2 to 1:10.

41. (New) A method of using a food casing according to claim 13 as synthetic sausage casing.

In the Abstract:

Please replace the abstract with the Abstract attached.